

alliance Quebec NOTES

WEEKLY COMMENT & ANALYSIS ON THE COMING QUEBEC ELECTION

Published by the Communications Work Group at Alliance Quebec
Thursday, July 21, 1994 - ISSUE #5

«L'An Prochain: Quel Niveau de Vie?»

The Parti Québécois tried to make the theme of this year's "apolitical" Fête de la Saint-Jean parade "L'an Prochain: Mon Pays." As all Quebecers prepare to make an electoral decision not dissimilar to the 1980 referendum, a more fitting question might be: Next Year: What standard of living?

The separatist plan outlines a timetable for negotiating "sovereignty" from Canada that starts the day after an election victory. However, their plans include a cultural and social re-engineering that would change the lives of most Quebecers in dramatic and unexpected ways.

- The separatists promise to take Canadians right back into the heart of constitutional negotiations.
- The PQ's plan states that Quebec "society" must "take steps to participate actively in [foreign corporations'] ownership and control"
- The separatists want to change social programs so as to "rethink the methods of redistributing wealth."

Media Days

JULY 15 - Alliance Quebec and a group of interested parties react to the Kenniff Report. Among mostly positive responses, Michael Hamelin also warned of the PQ's plans to take religious instruction out of schools.

● Jacques Parizeau welcomes Preston Manning's planned visit to Quebec as "cute, adorable" and "amusing."

CONTRASTING HEADLINES

Journal de Montreal:

LA SOUVERAINITÉ EN CHUTE LIBRE

The Globe and Mail:

50% see win as mission nod for PQ

Both headlines referred to the same findings of the same Léger & Léger poll.

● Reports say the premiers would sign a "moderate" provincial trade agreement on Monday.

JULY 16 - Mario Dumont complains that he is not being invited to the televised leaders debate.

● With a rebuke to the Globe and Mail, Le Devoir publishes Claude Castonguay's unpublished letter to the Globe (in French) and the Globe's Editorial response (published in Le Devoir in English).

● The PQ expresses concern that their.

Over...

→ The separatists seek to stem global media influence so as not to be "impoverished and homogenized." They call for a society that "is defined by a shared language, a shared history, and shared values and institutions."

→ They will "abolish Bill 86 and re-establish the Charter of the French language (Bill 101) in its integrity."

→ At work their plans are for "reinforcing the right to work in French by extending the francization of business process to businesses of ten employees or more." Under this plan, francization, which presently impacts on Quebec's 3,000 largest businesses, would be extended into the more than 175,000 smaller businesses.

These and other plans of one of the two major parties vying to be the government of Quebec ought to be cause for concern to all Quebecers.

Quite apart from well-recognized plans to take Quebecers into a referendum that can only be a lose-lose situation for the province, the policies the PQ propose do not move us forward in the world, but take us back. It is the quality of life of Quebec residents that is at stake in this debate. Looking ahead one year - or the four years of government - what must we ask of our politicians today?

Next year our standard and quality of life ought to have improved - not diminished.

VOTING DAY -

Monday, September 12

The Election will be called shortly.

In other countries, people put all they have on the line for a chance to direct their future. We cannot let the polls, the media, and some idea of foregone conclusions tell us how to vote and what to vote for.

Get Involved in the future. Call us and see what you can do.

Media Days

polling results are "too high."

- - PQ members in Mercier charge irregularities in the nomination voting and ask for a new nomination procedure. PQ leaders take up the issue at a secret Wednesday-night meeting.

- - **La Presse's** Alain Dubuc charges both Parties fail to present a forward-looking economic plan.

- - Jacques Parizeau tells **Le Devoir** that he will turn his supporters onto sovereignty.

JULY 16 - Jacques Parizeau says that the economy is job one, and that all Quebecers must unite to focus on recovery.

- - All papers, French and English, report that Johnson and premiers will put on a show of solidarity for Quebecers.

JULY 19 - The PQ says school board reform will be easier in a sovereign Quebec.

- - **The Gazette** views the provincial trade deal as "modest." **La Presse** says it shows "the power of federalism." **Le Devoir** calls it "holding a mass for federalism". The only photos are carried in **Le JdeM** and **La Presse**.

(The next day a **Le Devoir** editorial accuses "the English media" of trying to blow it out of proportion.)

- - Preston Manning is greeted by protesters in Quebec. He says federalists must descend on Quebec.

- - US V-P Al Gore finishes a tour of Canadian media saying internal political issues are up to Canadians.

JULY 20 - News reports say the election will be called tomorrow.

- - Gerald Godin (former MNA) says he will contest the Mercier nomination.

- - Ottawa and Quebec announce an agreement to keep CMR open in Saint-Jean.

- - Jacques Parizeau attacks the provincial trade agreement as "sclerotic." **La Presse's** editorialist Pierre Gravel says much the same.

- - Preston Manning says that voting for Johnson won't solve Quebec or Canada's ills.

- - Canadian bonds drop dramatically.

Election rules (you need to know)

Who can vote . . .

All 18-year-old Canadian citizens who have been resident in Quebec for six months, who are not interdicted or for some other extraordinary reason deprived of civil status to vote. Add to that list:

- those adults presently living outside Quebec who moved from the province in the past two years but who plan to return to Quebec to live
- those living temporarily away from home can be registered to vote in their home riding or in the riding where they live temporarily.

To be eligible to cast a vote you must be named on the electoral list for one and only one of the 125 ridings.

How is the voting list made up?

- the door-to-door enumeration takes place in the fifth week of the campaign over a four-day period (Monday through Thursday) (If the election is called for September 12, enumeration will take place August 8 through August 17.)
- the canvassers who take the names are called enumerators. They are selected to work in pairs, calling twice at each door of a given poll, once in the daytime and once in the evening. They record the names of all voters they can find.

(NB In some ridings, enumerator jobs are available. The political parties select the enumerators: call the riding office of the party of your choice for more details.)

What if I am not visited by the enumerators?

Each voter's home receives a first draft enumeration list for their district not later than 21 days before voting day. The list is also available at the office of the District Returning officer.

If your name is not on that list, you may go to the Office of the District Election officer which is listed in all newspapers. There is a twelve day revision period during which you can add your name to the list.

- If your name is on the wrong list, you go to the same office to ask that your name be stricken from the list.
- Changes can also be made by the relatives of the electors who wish to be added or removed from the list.
- A second special revision period is also provided to add or subtract voters' names from the electoral list. This special revision continues from the 15th day before the vote to the 6th day before the vote. So if the election is called for September 12, the last day to have your name inscribed on the correct voters' list is Wednesday, September 7.

Election stakes: Another generation of this

There is only one truly "sure thing" that the election - expected to be launched this week in Quebec - brings to voters. That is the guarantee that if the separatists succeed at forming the next government of Quebec then all Canadians - including those resident in Quebec - can count on another generation having to dedicate their fullest efforts to the question of unity and our constitutional, linguistic and social arrangements.

Peace on this front - or at least a more peaceful environment in which to deal with issues such as the economy, debt, immigration, jobs for our young people - is what's on the line in this September's Quebec vote.